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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER WAITING LIST TO OPEN
MONDAY, AUGUST 14 – FRIDAY, AUGUST 18, 2006

Online Applications Will Be Accepted; Paper Applications Available at Locations Throughout Montgomery County

The Housing Opportunities Commission will open its waiting list for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program on Monday, August 14 through Friday, August 18, 2006. The Housing Choice Voucher program supplements rent payments for low-income families. The waiting list will open for the first time in three years and is expected to attract more than 8,000 applicants.

“We expect a large turnout during the five days in August that the list is open,” said Joy Flood, HOC Director of the Rental Assistance Division.

“The dwindling number of affordable units in our county, coupled with a low vacancy rate and high rental prices make it extremely difficult for low-income families to cope without financial housing assistance,” said Flood.

“We have tried to make it easier for people to apply. Online applications will be accepted through the HOC website during the period the waiting list is open,” said Flood. The HOC website is: www.hocmc.org. HOC will also offer the ability to apply online at its booth at the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair from August 14 through August 18. Applicants are encouraged to apply online for the waiting list. Paper applications are also available at locations throughout Montgomery County. (See attached list.)

Income Limits: The Housing Choice Voucher Program is a federally funded program that is administered by the Housing Opportunities Commission. The Housing Choice Voucher Program is open to households that earn under 50 percent of the median income (See income chart attached).

For example, a family of three can earn no more than \$40,650 to qualify for the assistance. However, under federal program rules, the Housing Opportunities Commission must reserve 75 percent of their available vouchers for use by households that are considered “extremely low” income, earning 30 percent and below of the median income. For example, a family of three would fall into the “extremely low” income category if they earned under \$24,400

The average cost of a 2-bedroom unit in Montgomery County in 2005 was \$1,224, according to statistics from the County’s Department of Housing and Community Affairs. In order to afford this level of rent without paying more than 30% of their income, a household income of \$49,000 would be required, according to statistics released by the National Low Income Housing Coalition.

Background Statistics: HOC currently administers 5,300 vouchers to low income households in the county. The median income of an HOC resident is \$10,442. Families participating in the

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program typically pay 30 percent of their household income toward rent and utilities. HOC pays the remainder due to the landlord. The average monthly subsidy under the HCV program is \$950.

Paper applications will be available beginning Monday, August 14 at all Montgomery County libraries, all County Service Centers, two Montgomery Works' One-Stop Career Development Centers (see attached for addresses) and a variety of government and nonprofit organizations in the County. The online application will be available beginning Monday, August 14 through Friday, August 18.

Applications are accepted for the Housing Choice Voucher Program ONLY during the period the waiting list is open. All applications being mailed to HOC must be postmarked by August 18. The mailing address for applications (which is also on the application itself) is: Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List, Post Office Box 629, Kensington, MD 20895-0629.

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SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER WAITING LIST OPENING AUGUST 14, 2006 – AUGUST 18, 2006

The Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) will open its Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List on Monday, August 14, 2006. The Waiting List will close on Friday, August 18, 2006.

To apply:

Pre-applications will be available beginning August 14, 2006. The pre-applications can be picked up from various locations (listed below) in the County. **NO PRE-APPLICATIONS WILL BE MAILED FROM HOC.** The pre-applications can be picked up at:

- All Montgomery County Public Libraries
- Montgomery County Regional Service Centers
- Montgomery County Non-Profit Agencies
- Montgomery Works Wheaton, Westfield Shoppingtown Plaza, 11002 Veirs Mill Road, 1st floor, Wheaton, Md.
- Montgomery Works Lakeforest, Lakeforest Mall, 701 Russell Avenue, E205, Gaithersburg, Md.
- On the HOC website: www.hocmc.org **On-line applications are being accepted.**

Pre-Applications will only be accepted by mail at the address shown below or ONLINE at: www.hocmc.org Please do **NOT** deliver applications to HOC's offices.

**Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List
Post Office Box 629
Kensington, MD 20895-0629**

Submitting a pre-application does not guarantee housing or a place on the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher waiting list. All pre-applications postmarked or received online between August 14, 2006 and August 18, 2006 will be processed as having been received by HOC at the same time.

ALL FAMILIES WHO SUBMITTED PRE-APPLICATIONS IN AUGUST 2003 AND HAVE NOT BEEN NOTIFIED OF SELECTION MUST SUBMIT A NEW PRE-APPLICATION, TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE WAITING LIST. THE AUGUST 2003 PRE-APPLICATIONS WILL BE DISCARDED.

HOC will conduct an ongoing lottery to select pre-applications for eligibility and family interviews for at least 12 months or until the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List re-opens. When the waiting list re-opens for new applicants, all pre-applications collected during this opening period will be discarded. Public housing residents or participants in other HOC programs must submit a separate application in order to be included in this Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List Opening.

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List Hotline Telephone Number is **301-962-5401**. The Hotline will open August 7, 2006. The TTY number for the hearing impaired is: **301-962-5572**.

Frequently Asked Questions about HOC's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List

1) Who can apply for Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Rental

Assistance? You must be 18 years or older to submit a pre-application. There is no minimum income limit. As required by the U.S. Housing Act of 1937, seventy-five percent (75%) of families newly admitted to the Section 8 Rental Assistance Program must qualify as Extremely Low-Income families. The other twenty-five percent (25%) of families newly admitted to the Program must qualify as Very Low-Income families. Your household income cannot exceed the following income limits:

FAMILY SIZE	EXTREMELY LOW-INCOME (30% OF AREA MEDIAN)	VERY LOW-INCOME (50% OF AREA MEDIAN)
1	\$18,950	\$31,600
2	\$21,700	\$36,100
3	\$24,400	\$40,650
4	\$27,100	\$45,150
5	\$29,250	\$48,750
6	\$31,450	\$52,350
7	\$33,600	\$56,000
8+	\$35,750	\$59,600

2) How can I apply? Mail a completed pre-application to HOC Section 8 Waiting List, P.O. Box 629, Kensington, MD. 20895-0629, or apply on-line at www.hocmc.org. Pre-applications will only be accepted on-line, or by mail. Only those pre-applications postmarked or submitted on-line between August 14-18, 2006 will be accepted. Pre-applications e-mailed, hand-delivered, or mailed to any address other than the P.O. Box shown on the pre-application will not be accepted.

3) Can I apply for HOC's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List if I am not a Montgomery County resident? Preference is given to people who live, work, or have notification of work in Montgomery County. However, anyone can apply.

4) How will I know whether or not I have been selected? You will receive written notification from HOC if you have been randomly selected. All pre-applications not selected prior to the next opening of the waiting list will be discarded.

5) Am I guaranteed Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Rental Assistance if I fill out a pre-application form? No. When Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher funding becomes available, HOC will contact applicants who have been selected by lottery from the pool of pre-applications.

6) If I am selected, what is the next step? If you are selected you will be notified by mail. HOC will ask you to submit information to verify your eligibility.

7) After the waiting list closes, will I be able to call HOC and determine where I am on the list? No. After the waiting list has closed, HOC will notify all applicants by mail that their pre-application has been received. The new waiting list process does not organize the pre-applications in number order. All pre-applications will be maintained in a pool until randomly selected by lottery when funding becomes

available.

8) After I have submitted my application, do I have to do anything else? You must notify HOC in writing if your address changes. HOC must be able to contact you if you have been selected to receive rental assistance through the Housing Choice Voucher program.

9) If I receive Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Rental assistance, how much will I pay in rent? Families receiving Section 8 Rental Assistance usually pay 30% - 40% of their adjusted gross income in rent.

10 What are the requirements of receiving Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Rental Assistance? As part of its selection process, HOC conducts verification of income, special needs, family composition and criminal background checks.

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